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Wayne County Foundation Names Recipients of Prestigious Awards

The Wayne County Foundation is pleased to announce the recipients of their most prestigious awards for 2020.

Monica Koechlein was awarded the *Charles A. Rodefeld Award for Leadership in Philanthropy and the Community*. The award honors the Foundation's founder, Charles Rodefeld, a person who moved quietly but steadily to help meet community needs. The Rodefeld Award recognizes Wayne County citizens and/or companies who have been there when agencies or organizations most needed them, who served faithfully, though without fanfare, and who have provided leadership and significant financial support over the years. Nominated by the both the Richmond Friends School and the Stamm Koechlein Family Foundation, Monica was recognized as a leader who has a true passion and interest in the community and one who works to build strong relationships between patrons of the arts and the Richmond Symphony Orchestra, where she serves as Executive Director. Additionally, she serves on the development committee for Richmond Friends School and helped develop the Scholarship Forward Initiative, a tuition assistance program.

Indiana University East Vice-Chancellor of External Affairs, Jason Troutwine, said of Monica: "Her greatest service and gift to our community is what she does outside of her role with Stamm Koechlein Family Foundation and the Richmond Symphony Orchestra. She is a quiet leader. She encourages people along their path by creating training and networking opportunities. She champions young professionals by introducing them to new partners or mentors. She looks for opportunities to make Wayne County better and motivates others to share in the vision...and then, steps back from the spotlight. Monica embodies the very spirit of the Rodefeld award."

Aileen Githens was selected to receive the *Ruth J. Wickemeyer Award for Community Service* which was named for the Foundation's founding executive director and which recognizes paid or volunteer not-for-profit leaders who personify exceptional service to others in the name of community progress. Aileen was nominated by the Civic Hall Associates where she volunteers as an usher. In addition to her volunteer work there, she is also actively involved at the Wayne County Tourism Bureau, Boys and Girls Clubs of Wayne County, Richmond Civic Theatre, and Central United Methodist Church.

In her nomination, Mary Walker, Executive Director of the Richmond-Wayne County Convention and Tourism Bureau wrote of Aileen “Aileen has long advocated for Wayne County, praising our communities’ wonderful treasures to countless visitors, from near and far, for well over 20 years. At the Tourism Bureau, she is passionate, engaging, and enthusiastic when greeting guests and always goes above and beyond to make their time here memorable and worthwhile.”

Millie Martin Emery added “As she serves thousands of children, tourists, arts lovers of all ages, and Alzheimer’s residents at Friends Fellowship each year, Aileen humbly volunteers tirelessly for multiple groups without a need for awards or recognition for service. She is a valuable team member, encouraging volunteers who are decades younger through the example she sets of love for her adopted hometown and its people.”

Both recipients will be honored at a later date.

Established in 1979, the Wayne County Foundation encourages individual, family, and corporate philanthropy in order to meet current and emerging community needs. Gifts to and through the Foundation create the resources needed to address critical issues throughout the county...Today. Tomorrow. Forever.

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